

**ANNEX F**

**FIREFIGHTING**

**CITY OF HOUSTON**

# **APPROVAL AND IMPLEMENTATION**

## **Annex F**

### **Firefighting**

**ANNEX REDACTED – DATA REMOVED**

## RECORD OF CHANGES

### Annex F

#### Firefighting

Change #	Date of Change	Entered By	Date Entered

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## **ANNEX F**

### **FIREFIGHTING**

#### **I. AUTHORITY**

See City of Houston Basic Plan

#### **II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this annex is to provide the City of Houston with a firefighting plan to meet the demands of a disaster situation. In addition to fire fighting, responsibilities in rescue are also addressed in order to describe a trained and equipped emergency rescue response force which can locate, identify and remove survivors, injured, marooned, and dead from stricken areas.

#### **III. EXPLANATION OF TERMS**

Refer to City's Basic Plan.

#### **IV. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS**

##### **A. Situation**

Fire prevention and control are daily problems faced by fire service personnel. These problems become more significant during emergency situations. Several hazards present difficulties with regard to fire protection against conflagrations, explosions, forest fires, nuclear attack, hazardous materials and natural disasters. Severe structural damage from these hazards could result in people being trapped in damaged and collapsed structures, missing persons and casualties.

##### **B. Assumptions**

1. Existing fire personnel and equipment will be able to handle most emergency situations with departmental resources.
2. When additional support is needed, assistance can be obtained through existing mutual aid agreements.
3. A trained, equipped and organized rescue service will provide the capability to conduct search and rescue operations to minimize loss of life, shore up and stabilize weakened structures, release trapped persons and locate the missing or dead.
4. Specially trained and equipped airport units can provide on-airport capability to handle aircraft accidents and rescue of passengers.

#### **V. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**

##### **A. General**

1. The responsibility of fire services in disaster situations is basically the same as in daily operations.

2. During emergency operations, assistance may be required from the following City departments in order for the Houston Fire Department (HFD) to effectively provide fire control, hazardous material and oil spill response and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) services. These include:

- Houston Police Department (HPD)
- Public Works & Engineering Department (PW&E)
- Houston Office of Emergency Management (OEM)

Specific support needs from these departments are described in section VI.B of this annex.

B. Protective Action Recommendations

As fire service personnel are generally the most knowledgeable of the threat posed by fire and hazardous materials, they are generally responsible for assessing the threat posed by those hazards and recommending appropriate protective actions for emergency responders to the IC, including requirements for personal protective equipment. Fire service personnel are also responsible for recommending appropriate protective actions for the public in the vicinity of the incidents involving those threats.

C. Evacuation Operations

1. During the response to a fire, flooding or a hazardous materials incident, the IC may determine that expedient evacuation is necessary to protect people at the incident site and in the immediate vicinity. Fire service personnel and other emergency responders at the incident site will normally warn affected residents and direct their evacuation.
2. For major emergencies and disasters, significant evacuation may be necessary. During such evacuations, the fire service may be tasked to:
  - a. Assist in alerting those in the affected area who have not been warned by other means.
  - b. Assist in the evacuating individuals who require assistance.
  - c. Notify OEM if further coordination is required.

D. Terrorist Incident Response

Refer to Annex V.

E. Requesting External Assistance

Refer to the City's Basic Plan.

F. Phases of Management

1. Mitigation
  - a. Enforce fire code
  - b. Provide public fire safety information programs
  - c. Maintain a resource inventory of equipment available for rescue operations

- d. Develop public awareness programs in an effort to reduce accidents
  - e. Inspect emergency shelters for compliance with fire codes
- 2. Preparedness
  - a. Maintain equipment
  - b. Train fire personnel
  - c. Develop communications procedures
  - d. Train rescue squads on a regular basis
  - e. Test, maintain and repair equipment on a scheduled basis
  - f. Revise and update plans at regular intervals
  - g. Prepare and execute mutual aid agreements for fire suppression and rescue
- 3. Response
  - a. Contain, control and extinguish fires
  - b. Initiate rescue missions as necessary
  - c. Mobilize support services and equipment as needed
- 4. Recovery
  - a. Perform inspection of restored or reconstructed buildings
  - b. Perform or assist in decontamination or cleanup
  - c. Recommend condemnation of unsafe buildings

## **VI. ORGANIZATION & ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. Organization**

- 1. The Suppression Division of the HFD consists of a network of fire stations located throughout the City and staffed by skilled firefighters who are trained in firefighting and first aid. The HFD also has highly trained specialists in high-rise firefighting, technical rescue, hazardous materials incidents, shipboard incidents and aircraft crash rescue. Suppression is divided into four (4) shifts with twenty-one (21) districts. All firefighting communications are controlled from the Fire Department's Communication Center. The HFD has written mutual aid agreements with neighboring communities surrounding Houston who can furnish additional firefighting equipment upon request.
- 2. The City Fire Marshal heads a division with the responsibility to enforce all laws of the State of Texas and Ordinances of the City that cover the prevention of fires, the storage and use of explosives and flammables, installation and maintenance of automatic and manual fire extinguishing equipment, the maintenance and regulation of fire escapes and ensure the means and adequacy of exits in case of fire, the investigation of all multiple alarm fires, fire of suspicious nature, fire fatalities, false alarms and all bombings and explosions which occur within the city limits. The

operations are conducted primarily from Fire Prevention Headquarters with the utilization of five (5) satellite sub-stations and seven (7) specialized inspection teams.

3. The Chief of the HFD is responsible for the organization, training and operations under the HFD Basic Disaster Plan.
4. A representative from the Fire Chief's headquarters, under disaster conditions, will be located in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), when it is activated.
5. The Fire Chief has appointed Fire Department personnel to serve as the Department's Liaison at the EOC when requested. Responsibility of this individual is to coordinate department residual resources with the EOC and keep other City staff officials informed as to the needs of the HFD.
6. Planning by the Fire Chief or Department planning officers will be accomplished to ensure that the following requirements are met:
  - a. That apparatus and equipment can be assembled, as needed, at command posts near the disaster area
  - b. That personnel and/or equipment can be relocated as conditions dictate
  - c. That command personnel can be assembled at facilities where the Department may be controlled without benefit of normal communication facilities
  - d. That resulting fires can be controlled, whether the operational area is within the boundaries of the City of Houston or in nearby communities of the area
  - e. That emergency operations can be instituted and directed toward the rescue of persons threatened by fire or other disasters

B. Assignment of Responsibilities

1. HFD
  - a. Coordinate all fire services activity within the City
  - b. Dispatch and deployment of fire/rescue personnel and equipment during an emergency
  - c. Fire control
  - d. Fire prevention
  - e. Fire code enforcement
  - f. Preparation of appropriate mutual aid agreements
  - g. Support for other public safety operations
  - h. Technical rescue operations
  - i. Provide and operate rescue and evacuation boats for shallow and deep water rescue operations
  - j. Provide basic and advanced medical life support



- k. Fire Protection in Emergency Shelters
- 2. HPD
  - a. Provide on-scene crowd control
  - b. Provide traffic control
  - c. Provide underwater recovery capability
- 3. PW&E
  - a. Barricade streets, as necessary, during fire and rescue operations
  - b. Assist in clean-up operations and debris removal as necessary
  - c. Assist as requested with Department's Confined Space Rescue Team
  - d. Provide assistance in the demolition of structures
- 4. OEM
  - a. Overall responsibility for coordination of City resources as well as those from outside agencies as necessary
  - b. Operation of the EOC to support field operations
  - c. Coordination of State and Federal resources
  - d. Coordinate human service needs for emergency responders and victims with The Salvation Army (TSA)
  - e. Coordinate transportation needs as well as requests for buses to rehab emergency responders with METRO
  - f. Coordinate human service needs with ARC

## **VII. DIRECTION AND CONTROL**

- A. General
  - 1. Emergency procedures for the HFD will become effective when the Fire Chief declares that the Department is confronted with a condition in the category of a major emergency and the situation threatens to develop beyond the control of the facilities and resources of the HFD.
  - 2. During a major emergency or disaster situation, which requires activation of the EOC, the Fire Chief or his/her designee will be responsible for coordinating all emergency fire service operations within the jurisdiction. An on-scene command post will be established at the site of the disaster situation in conjunction with other responding agencies, such as law enforcement. The Fire Chief or his/her designee will establish and maintain communications with the on-scene command post and may direct emergency operations from the EOC in coordination with other responding agency representatives at the EOC. If local capabilities are exceeded, the Fire Chief or his/her designee will request outside assistance from mutual aid agreements. If state or federal resources are needed, the

Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) or the Deputy Coordinator will make the request to the local Disaster District Committee Chairperson at DPS Region 2A.

B. Incident Management System - EOC Interface

Refer to the City's Basic Plan.

C. Continuity of Government

A chain of command is clearly established so that the line of authority and succession can be followed in the absence of the Fire Chief, as follows:

1. Assistant Chiefs
2. Deputy Chiefs

**VIII. READINESS LEVELS**

Refer to the City's Basic Plan.

**IX. ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT**

A. Reports, Records and Preservation of Records

Refer to the City's Basic Plan.

B. Communications

The HFD Communications system will consist of a combination of landline and radio. Primary control and coordination of all operations, however, will be handled by the existing two-way radio system. Refer to the City's Annex B, Communications, for more information.

C. Resources

A listing of available fire department resources is found in Appendix 1.

D. Post Incident Review

Refer to the City's Basic Plan.

**X. ANNEX DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE**

A. The Fire Chief is responsible for developing and maintaining this annex. Recommended changes to this annex should be forwarded as needs become apparent.

B. This annex will be reviewed annually and updated in accordance with the schedule outlined in the Basic Plan.

**XI. REFERENCES**

A. Annex F (Firefighting) to the State of Texas Emergency Management Plan.

B. Texas Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan, May 1998.

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 .....	Houston Fire Department Resources
Appendix 2 .....	High-rise Fire Fighting Procedures
Appendix 3 .....	Incident Command Procedures
Appendix 4 .....	Hurricane Procedures

## **APPENDIX 1 TO ANNEX F**

### **Houston Fire Department Resources**

A copy of this appendix is on file in the OEM. Can be found on the HFD web site located at <http://www.cityofhouston.gov>.

## **APPENDIX 2 TO ANNEX F**

### High-rise Fire Fighting Procedures

A copy of this appendix is on file in the OEM.

## **APPENDIX 3 TO ANNEX F**

### **Incident Command Procedures**

A copy of this appendix is on file in the OEM.

## **APPENDIX 4 TO ANNEX F**

### Hurricane Procedures

A copy of this appendix is on file in the OEM.